

AN ADDRESS

ON

THE BALLOT BOX

DELIVERED BY

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THE BALLOT-BOX.

The ballot-box is merely a receptacle for ballots. Legally, there is no requirement as to its size or shape. It may be either round or square; and if it were hexagonal or octagonal, the election on that account would not be invalid. In size it need only be of sufficient capacity to answer the purpose of its use. There is no restriction or limitation as to the material of which it is to be made. Until the silver of Nevada, the gold of California, the iron of Pennsylvania, and the forests of the Nation are exhausted, we cannot be deprived of this important article in our elections; even then, there is a multitude of other materials of which it can be made. The supply of materials is ample for ourselves and our posterity.

The term box, however, is generally used to denote a wooden vessel. In our State the ballot-box is manufactured from wood.

There are instances in history, of boxes used for this purpose, which were not made of wood.

In Athens, that wonderful democracy, existing in the centuries before the Christian era, the free-men in exercising their right to vote, placed their ballots in receptacles of brass.

When the citizens of republican Rome exercised their royal prerogative, a wicker box received the mandate of their will. To this day, in Greece,

metal boxes are used. Each box is divided into two compartments, and is provided with a funnel-shaped opening, with a division in it, providing at the inner end a separate entrance to each compartment. One of these compartments is called the "Yes" box and the other the "No" box. The voter thrusts his arm into the funnel-shaped opening, and then, secure from observation, he drops his vote, a metal ball, into whichever compartment he desires.

In England, Germany, France, Hungary, Italy, and the British provinces, wooden boxes are used.

A box used in every-day life, is nothing but a common box, valued only because of its utility; but a box set apart to receive the expression of the will of the sovereign people, ceases to be ordinary, and at least, while used for that noble purpose, ought almost to be considered as a sacred thing. When thus employed it bears an exalted character; and becomes an object of the law's jealous guardianship.

The box is ennobled by its contents—the ballots.

The word ballot owes its origin to the French word *ballotte*, and the Spanish *balota*, and signifies in its restricted and primary meaning a little ball used in secret voting.

In Athens, the ballots used were made either of stone (*psephi*) or of metal (*sponduli*), and were pierced or unpierced, or else black or white, to indicate condemnation or approval.

In Syracuse, words written on olive leaves, were voted; this practice was named *petalism*.

In Rome, small wooden tablets were used as ballots, and the ballot was resorted to in determining elections, deciding causes, and in enacting or repealing laws.

The ballot of the present day, however, is either a printed or written ticket, made of paper. The wooden tablet has disappeared, and the ball, or real ballot, is now only used in social and secret organizations, and in some corporations in electing officers and admitting members, except in Greece, which, perhaps, is the only country still using metal ballots.

A peculiar substitute for the ballot is recorded as having been in use in Hungary. Each candidate had a large box, painted with some distinguishing color, with his name superscribed thereon. On entering the room alone, the voter received a rod, from four to six feet in length, which he placed in the box through a slit in the lid.

This was a primitive method, intended to secure an honest vote, and for that purpose is much to be preferred to tissue-ballots. It would be very difficult to carry many non-official rods about one's person, or to conceal many ballots, from four to six feet in length. The Hungarian system is cordially recommended to any unreconstructed portion of the South, as an antidote for unlawful and cumulative voting.

The ballot does not seem to have been very extensively used until recently. Within the last quarter of a century alone, the use of it has become general among the leading nations of the earth. It was not until 1872 that the ballot was

introduced in all parliamentary and municipal elections in England (except for representatives of the Universities). In that year the Ballot Act was passed (35 and 36 Vic. c. 3). As late as the beginning of the second Empire in France, it was decreed by the Organic decree of February 2, 1852, that the members of the French Legislature should be elected by ballot. It was not until the establishment of Italian Unity, that the ballot, theretofore existing in Piedmont, was adopted in Italy. Germany began to use the ballot in 1867, and the new German Constitution of 1871 provided that all elections to the Reichstag should be by ballot. Under a special law, certain municipal officers of Prussia were elected by ballot as far back as 1808. In Hungary it was adopted in 1848, but abolished, so far as Parliamentary elections are concerned, since 1874. In some of the British provinces this method of voting was adopted before it found favor in the eyes of the mother country.

Naturally we turn to the great Republic of the West, the true mother of popular elections and the sovereignty of the people, expecting to learn of its early adoption and use.

Every one that glories in the name of American, whether receiving that name by adoption, or holding it as a birthright, ought to honor and revere Plymouth Rock, and hold in sacred memory the name of Pilgrim. No one can contemplate the grand birthright and sacred privileges of American citizenship, without recognizing that we owe a debt of gratitude to the Pilgrim

Fathers for many rock truths, upon which so much has been built. In these days of laxity, when liberty is in danger of being transformed into license, there is a growing tendency to sneer at many of the teachings and practices of the Puritans ; but every candid man, and every patriot, will delight to trace in our institutions of to-day elements of morality and liberty, of law and order, all, the outgrowth of their stern morality, rigid adherence to principle, and love of liberty and equality. Let us delight to trace in their pure teachings the germs of inestimable blessings possessed by us, and honor and respect their memory and virtues.

These men thought for themselves. For the sake of principle they left their homes in England, and sought shelter in Holland. They loved the truth, as they apprehended it, and made great sacrifices for its sake. They were not afraid to work ; industry was a part of their religion. They were honest, and to be so was ingrained. They were not meddlesome, for they trained themselves, as a duty, to mind their own affairs. The licentious revelries of the age were held in abhorrence. Possessed of deep religious feeling and clear convictions, they wrought when work was proper, and rested on the great appointed day of rest. Sunday to them was not a day of wildest dissipation, but a day of calm and peaceful worship.

In the organization of their little church, they evolved a mighty truth. They met as equals, and elected their officers, not to be their masters, but their servants ; the right to rule themselves be-

came their children's birthright. This principle was then but a tiny, purling spring of truth; but now, as we trace its flow through centuries, we behold it sweeping on, a mighty, majestic river, lifting on its bosom free States, whelming in its waters tyranny and oppression, and undermining the thrones of Kings and Emperors.

Think of it! A band of carpenters, blacksmiths and artisans, in the heart of old Holland, evolving the mighty truth that the people alone shall rule, and the correlated principle that those elected to office are not the masters, but the servants of the people. Grand principles, indeed! Vital principles in the government of our own Republic, and exerting a beneficent influence on the civilized world.

After they had left Leyden and reached Southampton, and were about to sail forth on their perilous voyage in search of an asylum, they elected their first governor, and that election was by ballot.

Charles C. Coffin, in "Old Times in the Colonies," thus describes the election: "They were men who loved order. They knew it was necessary to have some one in authority on shipboard. They *cast their votes* for governor, and elected John Carver. Let us not forget that they elected him. He was not appointed by the King, but chosen."

It was, indeed, the beginning of a new order of things.

On the 16th day of September, A. D., 1620, the Mayflower, with her precious cargo, set sail.

“No home for them ! Too well they knew
 The mitred king behind the throne.
 The sails were set, the pennon flew,
 And westward ho ! for worlds unknown.”

“Before landing in the New World, they met in the cabin of the Mayflower, signed their names to a paper, organizing as a body politic, agreeing to obey the laws they might make, and the Governor they might elect. The world never before had seen such a paper. It was a constitution formed by the people—the real beginning of popular government.”

It is safe to assert that the Pilgrims, at this early date, used the ballot, and also that it was largely used in the American colonies, and, doubtless, by most of them, at the date of the Revolution.

In the Constitution of Pennsylvania, adopted in 1790, the evidence of its early use in this State is found in this provision: “Election shall be by ballot.” The revised statutes of the United States inform us that “all votes for representatives in Congress must be by a written or printed ballot.” This requires the use of the ballot system of voting in every one of these United States.

The XIIth amendment to the Constitution of the United States provides for its use in the electoral college: “The electors shall vote for President and Vice President by ballot.” And again, “If no person shall have a majority of the electoral votes for President and Vice President, the House of Representatives shall immediately choose the President by ballot.”

The ballot is the synonym for secrecy, and the

direction to use the ballot-box is a pledge of freedom from scrutiny. It may not be without evil, in political elections, and its use has been frequently questioned ; but the whole trend of thought and practice to-day is overwhelmingly in its favor.

Mr. Gibbon, in his familiar work, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," avers that the famous republic began its decline from the introduction of secret voting, which, he says, destroyed public confidence—in effect, broke up the ancient relations of patron and client, and caused a general demoralization of the people.

In the elections of Greece, this system was both criticised and praised.

The brilliant Sydney Smith was found among its opponents in England ; and those who advocated it suffered from his fine sarcasm and ridicule. In spite of ridicule and argument, however, it has become the established practice of the Empire.

Curiously enough, the very argument assigned in its favor, in one country of Europe, was used, in another country, against it.

Cavour, that bright star that shone out of the Italian night, and whose skillful diplomacy achieved wonders for Italy, regarded the ballot with approval. In my judgment, said he, "the ballot has quite nullified the clerical power, at least in Piedmont."

On the contrary, in Hungary, when, in 1874, the use of secret voting was abolished in Parliamentary elections ; the reason given was, "That the ballot was worked by the Catholic clergy, through the confessional."

The grand object of the ballot is to secure an honest and free expression of judgment, to prevent intimidation and undue influence, and protect the voter from persecution. An employé must be free from fear of his employer; a storekeeper from the ill will of his patrons; a tenant from the intimidation of his landlord; and every citizen from his neighbors. To some extent, it also prevents bribery.

The personal responsibility of the voter is lessened by the concealment of his vote, but this is overmatched by the freedom secured to conscientious voters, to vote according to conscience. Secrecy is a veil of protection, and the voice of public sentiment is in its favor.

All devices by which the secrecy of the ballot is destroyed, such as the use of headings, colored tickets, or marked ballots, are exceedingly reprehensible, and should be discountenanced.

To prevent the use of such devices, the Government should issue all tickets. They should be of uniform size, with the names of all the candidates printed thereon; then the voter should be required to cancel a name or names, until those he desired alone remained. The ticket thus prepared would be free from all ear-marks or distinguishing headings.

In England, under the Ballot Act, the Government furnishes all the tickets, which are of uniform size, with the names of the candidates printed thereon in alphabetical order. The ticket is stamped by the officer, and numbered; the voter marks his choice on the ticket and folds it up,

leaving the official seal alone exposed to the officer's view, and deposits it in a box that is securely locked. The officer is bound to account, at the close of the election, for all the tickets furnished to him. If the voter spoils a ticket, the officer gives him a new one, and carefully preserves the one that has been spoiled.

The imitation of ballots, so arranged as to deceive the ignorant and unwary voter, is made a penal offence in this State, and deservedly so, as all will concede.

In our State the secrecy of the ballot has been so far invaded by constitutional provision as to require the numbering of the tickets—a wise provision to prevent fraud.

There are two occasions when the voter is called upon to expose his vote—

1st. If the vote is an illegal one—in which case its illegality must first be established, and then the voter can be compelled to answer how he voted. Under our system of numbering the ballots, in conjunction with the list of voters kept by the election officers, the vote itself can be readily traced, and excluded.

2d. In every case of alleged fraud, when it is sought to be established how many legal votes the candidate received, the voter can be called and asked how he voted. But the voter cannot be compelled to answer, except in a judicial investigation.

A great safeguard to the purity of the ballot-box, lies in the fact, that it has been judicially determined that in the prosecution of an election

officer for violating his trust, the box may be brought into court, and the tickets there recounted, in the presence of the jury, in order to establish the fraud.

It has been held, however, that in such an investigation the voter cannot be compelled to disclose for whom he voted, if he chooses to avail himself of his constitutional privileges. This ought not to be the law. It is magnifying the incident beyond the franchise. It is an instance of peculiar peril to our institutions, where the mere incident of suffrage is to be preserved at the expense of the right itself.

Of what value is the elective franchise, if corrupt officers of the election, by a stroke of the pen, can disfranchise a score of citizens ?

The pollution of the ballot-box is an evil which, if tolerated, will sap the very foundations of government by the people ; in its results, it may bring strife, bloodshed and anarchy. We suspend the writ of habeas corpus in times of public peril, for the safety of the Nation. Why not, also, the secrecy of the ballot, to secure its purity ?

If the moral sentiment of the community is strong, and the citizen appreciates the magnitude of the evil, by his own volition he can remedy it.

How ignoble the citizen, how unworthy of the name is he, when, for selfish reasons, he will refuse to disclose his vote though it may be necessary, in order to punish a wicked offender, and keep the ballot-box free from the reproach of corruption. Such a man is unworthy to exercise the high prerogative of citizenship, and is disloyal to his country.

A fraud may have been perpetrated, which the opening of the box and counting the tickets will not disclose, and the only means of detection lies in the examination of all the voters of the district. In such a case, every personal consideration should be voluntarily sacrificed for the public weal, or else the law should compel the reluctant and unworthy voter to speak.

In representative bodies, the ballot ought to be prohibited, for those acting in such a capacity ought to perform their trust in the most open, conspicuous and public manner.

In Great Britain, in the time of Charles II, political writers advocated its use in Parliament. There may have been some reason then for this, in view of the tremendous power of Court influence ; but to-day, with the representative system well defined, and the power of the Crown restricted, and the popular branch controlling the government, its use could only be pernicious. In Scotland, in 1662, the ballot was used in effecting the ostracism of certain political leaders. The Act was called the " Billeting Act," and the plan followed was this : Each member of Parliament wrote, in a disguised hand, on a piece of paper, the names of twelve suspected persons ; the billets were then put in a bag held by the Registrar ; the bag was then sealed, and afterwards opened in the Exchequer Chamber, where the billets were immediately burned, and the names of the ostracised concealed, on oath. In 1705, it was again proposed, as a measure, to guard the members from court influence, but not adopted.

In our own national, State and Municipal Legislatures, the ballot should have no place whatever ; every member of these bodies is acting in a representative capacity, and is responsible to his constituency for a just and proper discharge of duty. If secret balloting were allowed, personal responsibility would cease, and the most disastrous results follow. A cardinal principle in the political education of every American citizen should be, eternal opposition to the use of the ballot in every representative body. Even as at present arranged, with the roll-call in use, and with open voting, and the record of "ayes" and "noes" published far and wide, some men, with unblushing wickedness, have misrepresented their constituencies, defied their wishes, and that, too, regardless of the record of infamy and dishonor their votes created on the roll of their assembly and in the public press. If this be true, in the face of exposure and criticism, what would they not do if their acts were shielded and covered by the secrecy of the ballot?

We would also condemn the use of the ballot in our electoral college. There is certainly no use for the ballot in the hands of our Presidential electors ; why should they vote by ballot? Are they not elected directly to vote for certain candidates? Why, then, should they not vote openly, and before the community, so that their fidelity may be seen. What good reason can there be, in case the election of a President is thrown into the national House of Representatives, for that body to elect by ballot? As representatives, voting for others, ought not their votes to be cast openly

before the world, so that their constituencies may know their action, and be able to approve or disapprove it?" No one acting as the trusted agent of others should vote secretly.

The term ballot-box, however, is often used with a broad sweep of meaning, making it, as a term, synonymous with "suffrage" or the "elective franchise." It represents, in our institutions, the supreme liberty and privilege of citizenship. Its value ought not to be under-estimated, and it cannot, with relation to its importance, be over-estimated. It is the corner stone upon which the superstructure of our civil institutions rests. Every attempt to weaken it or undermine its strength is fraught with peril to our liberties.

In a country as broad as ours, with its many millions of people, the maintenance of absolute confidence in its purity, is of the gravest importance.

Let us, for a moment, look at the structure of our Republican form of Government, and note three important elements in our civil polity, and, as American citizens, let us learn to value our great privileges, and recognize our personal responsibility as freemen.

To do this properly, let us enter the chariot of thought, and then, with the rapidity of light, we may traverse the rich fields of history, containing the record of man's achievements in the ages past. Among the ruins of Ancient Greece or Rome, or, amid the disjointed and scattered fragments of the works of those who flourished in Mediæval Europe, we may gather suggestions, and endeavor, in some

small degree, to trace the evolutions by which pure government has been developed among mankind, until, in the meridian glory of our Nineteenth Century, we behold its grandest type in our beloved republic.

By the term government, as used in political or philosophical discussion, we mean that organism, no matter what may be its form, which represents the sovereign power in society and among men. It is that power which protects the social organization—that power which makes and executes law, and which demands and receives, while executing and enforcing the law, the loyalty and obedience of the people.

It is the embodiment of the majesty and power, as well as the sovereign will, of the community. There is no certain knowledge to be found on the fields of history, concerning the origin of government. We traverse her fruitful plains, until we reach the uttermost bounds of history, and see beyond, the marshy lowlands and bleak and uninviting rocky highlands, the place where wild tradition holds undisputed sway, and where the ruins of ancient societies are mingled in inextricable confusion, and covered by the debris of mythological monstrosities and fanciful fables.

We hear, from across the border, suggestions of families, with fathers acting as priest and king in their own households; and philosophy, like the naturalist with a single bone of some obsolete creation, attempts to reconstruct the body, until lo! we are presented with the most ancient, or the patriarchal form of government.

On the margin of the historical ground, in what we may call the debatable lands, we can trace the absolute despotisms of Ancient Egypt; behold the ruins of Babylon and Nineveh, see footprints of the Chaldees; admire the pomp and splendor of the Medo-Persian and Assyrian dynasties. These ruins are all marked with blood. They speak of conquest and slavery; of the royal few, and the serving, suffering multitudes. We cannot pause here for help; all of this ground is shrouded in darkness, misery and crime. There is no suggestion coming from the long line of the Pharaohs, or the Pyramids of Egypt; no whisper of liberty from the tomb of Nebuchadnezzar or Cyrus. Human life was without value, and war, cruel, relentless war, was the chief end of man's existence. Philip of Macedon learned and loved the art of war; Alexander fought for fame and wept for other fields in which his prowess might be displayed, for other nations to pay him tribute, for other peoples to subject to his despotic sway; but the glory of his military achievements was soon quenched in debauchery and lust.

Let us halt the chariot for a moment. This is the field of Syria; once it was Palestine; and once it was heathen Canaan. What a curious history we find in this sacred spot, thickly strewn with fragments, with moss-grown remnants of the past, marked by the tramp of centuries. Here we learn that a ray of brilliant light flashed forth its glory, all through the darkness, only, however, to be eclipsed at last in anarchy and desolation. This ray of light was an emanation from the throne

of God. The greatest lawgiver and ruler of the ages guided those who bore that light, as they journeyed to this promised land. Laws, written by the finger of God were embodied in the government of this people. The theocracy of Judah, created by the King of Kings, and sustained by deep religious convictions and superstitions, passed away. The spirit of the surrounding nations made the people cry out for a king; their cry was heard and answered, and the sceptre of kingly power was handed to Saul. The landmarks tell us, that after two or three glorious reigns, the despotism of the surrounding nations swayed the sceptres of Judah and Israel. Only intermittent flashes of the old glory are henceforth seen, until the dismembered fragments are scattered abroad over the face of the globe, or swallowed up and lost in the great sea of humanity.

Moses died, but the principles of justice which he enunciated still live. The principles of the Jewish religion and laws fostered liberty and made human life sacred. The temple on Mount Moriah has been transformed into the Mosque of Omar; but the principles of Judaism, broadened and deepened to answer the wants of humanity, have survived the transformation, and have been transmuted into the gospel of Love, through the promised Messiah, which, gifted with imperishable longevity, is leavening the whole lump of human existence with the magic spell of "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Christianity is the fountain of civil and religious liberty; and the flow of its waters shall murmur and sing the angel song

through all the passing years, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Now we are sweeping through Asia Minor; soon we cross the Ægean sea, and rest on the classic ground of history, the land of learning, philosophy, culture and art.

Here are traces of the first government that was founded on the idea that the people were the State.

The Greek republic, more especially the Athenian, gives us the democratic government in its fullest and most logical form. The people, that is, the free men, legislated directly; no despotic king gave to the people the arbitrary dictation of his will as the law of the State. The supreme power was vested in the people. The record informs us that all public questions were submitted to the people, who met almost weekly.

The Athenian youth, at 20 years of age, was a sovereign. He was the equal of kings, for he made the law; his brain might originate it; his eloquence might convince the judgment of others, and his vote could aid in its adoption.

Here we find a most valuable suggestion, one which we must carry with us, for its counterpart is to be found in our own polity; it is this, that the *majority shall govern*.

With regret, however, we note the stain of slavery, and find this little republic filled with slaves. They wrought, while the Athenian free-men voted, and legislated, and talked philosophy.

Aristotle, whose name is a synonym for wisdom, has truly said that a State should not be too large

nor too small ; it should not be so large but that all the citizens can be acquainted with each other, for "how else can they elect their magistrates."

In the Greek republics, the people voted and legislated directly ; they knew nothing of the representative in government. Nowhere else in all human history will we find such simplicity in the machinery of government, unless, indeed, among the Cantons of brave Switzerland.

But now we will pass into Europe proper. Let us alight among the dense forests of Germany ; behold the record of a hardy, valiant, honest people. These were the Teutons, who conquered Roman legions. These were also the men who found the germ of representative government. They originated the thought of "no taxation without representation." Montesquieu sings their praises and notes their virtues. Originally, their government was a staid gathering of friends, limited in number, and satisfying the postulate of Aristotle. In the folk-mote they all knew each other.

Where we have halted, we soon discover a magnificent ruin ; its size and strength bespeak its perpetuity. It shall always remain a noted landmark in the domain of history. On it we read the story of Charlemagne, the Frankish chieftain, who built a mighty empire, and governed it with skill and prudence. Here we can trace a system, a plan of government, that furnished the root germ which enters so largely into the machinery of government in the foremost nations of Europe. Here we find another suggestion, one that we can

carry with us, for it, too, exists in our own beloved land. The empire itself was mortal, and has perished from the earth; but the system of Charlemagne, in its development, is immortal.

History tells us that "at stated periods he sent messengers into counties, to confer with Counts and people; enforce render of service; hold courts and hear grievances, and redress them, or report them to the king. The coming of these envoys was an occasion of extraordinary importance; it furnished an opportunity to discuss the affairs of the people, and to have and dispose of appeals from the hundred courts, and present addresses to the King on subjects of universal importance and interest. These envoys were met by the most influential and considerable people of the counties."

We find, in Hungary, and in our mother country, that the shires of these countries were modeled on the plan of the Frankish chieftain, and that his authority on matters of government was highly respected.

Let us pass, for a moment, over into the water-bound, richly strewn fields of Albion.

The record of her past unfolds to us the story of her kings, of her life, and of her development. Early, in the very morning of her history, we see her kings in conference with the most eminent and powerful of their subjects; and we read, in their official utterances, of the sanction of these advisers of the kings. Kingly utterances were thus weighted with authority. As the years sped on, these advisers must have largely increased their

numbers, for Rufus, we are told, built Westminster Hall for their accommodation. In 1265, during the reign of Henry III, the first really representative body of lords, knights and citizens met, and they were called the Parliament. The origin of the Parliament is not clearly defined in history, but grew out of the necessities of the advancing civilization. A little space back of this, the memorable Runnymede and Magna Charta. In 1213 the first representative body was held, to consult over the affairs of the kingdom. Then came Magna Charta, in 1215, and on this ancient scroll we read—

“No scutage shall be imposed in the Kingdom, except by the common consent of the Common Council of the Kingdom, except to ransom the King's body, knight his eldest son, marry his eldest daughter ; and for this there shall be sufficient aid.”

The Great Charter provided how the council should be convened ; the representation provided for in it was developed in the following reign. The Lincoln Assembly, of Henry III, (1236) was attended by four knights of the county, elected by the militias and good men thereof. In 1264, Henry was taken prisoner, and it was not until 1265 that representatives of boroughs, as well as counties, were recognized. In electing these representatives, all freemen were allowed to vote. Thus the germ from the system of Charlemagne, the conferences of the kings with their leading men, and the advance of thought, developed the representative idea among men, which

has culminated in England, in the well equipped and powerful limited monarchy of to-day.

This idea developed on the continent, as far back as the Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries. It obtains in Arragon, Castile and France, and is now acknowledged in every important government of the earth. It also is embodied in our State and National system.

Let us turn back, for an instant only, to Old Holland. See that band of stern-featured men; they are those who developed the grand idea of equality. Those men are the Pilgrim Fathers. This principle is also built into our systems.

Thus, in the fields of history we have gleaned suggestions of the origin of three grand constituent elements of a free government by the people: The will of the majority supreme, the development of the representative idea in government, and lastly, the great doctrine of equality.

It only remains for us to furnish, from our own history, the crowning act of development—Unrestricted Suffrage. Even the manacled slave is free, and his vote is equal to yours or mine. Now, let me ask, what is our individual responsibility?

Formerly, nations depended principally on the accident of the character of the King or Minister, for their national character. A succession of war-like kings made Denmark a military power; a succession of quiet, half-witted sovereigns reduced her to political nullity.

Under Richelieu, France was intriguing and ambitious. Under Fleury, she was careless and

pacific; but now, with the extension of suffrage and the active use of the principles of representation, the people interfere in public affairs, often direct them, and almost always influence them. The conduct of a nation must always be affected by the disposition of the million. Louis XIV said: "I am the State;" but free and constitutional government everywhere, to-day, proclaims the third estate, which is the Nation. The *vox populi* is the voice of the government. The government can never, as a rule, be purer than the people; it will feel the pulse of public morality. The government of a representative character will always become a reflection of the popular character, or degenerate, through public apathy. We are responsible for our Government; because we can make or unmake our national morality and political character.

In the great American republic, which is our birthright, we behold the union of these grand principles of free government. We see embodied in our autonomy the trinity of excellencies: the political equality of our people, from the Pilgrim Fathers; the ruling will of the majority, from the republics of Greece, and the evolution of representative action, from the thought of Charlemagne and the forests of Germany. This triumvirate shows forth the supreme excellence of human thought, aided and developed by religious sentiment; it is our heritage, as freemen, and we find it symbolized in the ballot-box.

Young men of America, you are the hope of the Nation. Realize, if you can, the tremendous re-

sponsibility of citizenship ; for every citizen, by his loyalty and action, or by his disloyalty and neglect, is shaping the political character of the Nation ; and each one, in his moral and social life, is shaping the morality of the Nation. Remember that the Government will surely reflect the political life, and thought, and moral character of the majority of the people.

The elective franchise is a sacred privilege in your hands. Let it never be exercised in the spirit of indifference, or permit it to be despised through your example.

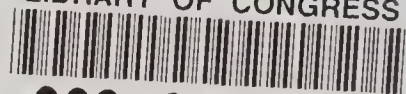
Party organization is a necessity, and party fealty is a grand consideration ; but blind party zeal is a curse to a nation. He who elevates party loyalty above love of country should be anathematized in history with Benedict Arnold, as a traitor.

Preserve the purity of the ballot, and inculcate, by act and speech, the great truth that party success achieved through corruption and impurity, is dearly bought. One of the trinity of political excellencies is lost. The will of the majority is not then supreme. No party can afford to win its way to office over a pathway of fraud.

Young men of America, what shall be the future of our Republic ? The answer rests with you. Her destiny is in your keeping ; will you make it bright and glorious, lifting, by your united strength, her banner high above the loftiest peaks of National growth and prosperity, placing her government on a plane of purity ? Then I charge you, to-night, hold fast and prize our liberties.

Stand forth always sustaining truth and right. Hold fast the three grand doctrines of our civil polity; and with all these, guard the ballot box, as you would your limb or life, or sacred honor. Guard it as the children of Israel guarded the Ark of the Lord, for it is, indeed, the "Holy of Holies" in our political institutions.

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